

GENERAL NOTES

Ring-billed Gull chases Great Blue Heron.—On March 6, 1950, Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Fievet, Tom Atkeson, William Jernigan and I were observing birds along the sloughs of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge about five miles up the Tennessee River from Decatur, Alabama. A Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias*, which rose ahead of us, elected to cross the river but was immediately beset by a lone adult Ring-billed Gull, *Larus delawarensis*, which had been flying and resting along the main channel. The gull centered its attack on the heron's back, apparently attempting to pull loose some upper tail coverts. The pursuit lasted about 45 seconds, during which time the heron flew forward perhaps 200 yards. When the heron veered, turning back for the bank, the gull discontinued its harassing and resumed its search for food in the main channel.

Though both fish-eaters, the Great Blue Heron and Ring-billed Gull obtain their food in quite different ways so they can hardly be considered competitors. I am, therefore, at a loss to explain the gull's antagonism to the heron in the case just reported.—THOMAS A. IMHOFF, 307 38th St., Fairfield, Alabama.

Bald Eagles attack crippled gull.—About 8 o'clock on the morning of January 17, 1943, Louis Brown and I were on the north levee of the Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge near Havana, Mason County, Illinois. While opening a gate into the Refuge we noticed an unusually large number of Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) flying over the lake and perching in trees along the shore.

Though we did not have binoculars, we soon discovered what appeared to be a center of the eagles' interest—a rather large gull about 75 yards out in the lake and possibly 100 yards from where we were standing. It was dodging the slow, awkward swoop of a low-flying eagle. Immediately after the attack the gull resumed a normal sitting position in the water. Presently several eagles, in rough formation, swooped one after another at the gull, which obviously was too badly injured to fly, though we could not tell just what was wrong with it. It dodged all these attacks, sometimes by diving. When the immediate danger was over and the air about it had cleared, it resumed a resting position. It seemed to be about the right size and color for a Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).

The attacks were not yet over. A total of 12 eagles, including several adults with white heads and tails, circled over the lake at the same time. One after another the great birds swooped down on the gull. The harried bird managed to elude each attack, although two or three times escape was narrow. At least two eagles touched the water with their claws or toes, and another actually settled momentarily, rising ponderously from the surface and flapping away. The whole performance called to mind a squadron of bombers peeling off in sequence in their determination to reach an objective.

After the mass attack the eagles separated somewhat, though some of them continued to swoop at the gull, which by this time was much farther out from shore. Eventually it disappeared from our sight around a promontory. We do not know what happened to it.

The inability of the eagles to capture the gull seemed to us good evidence that they could not be considered very important from the standpoint of primary predation. We were much impressed by the ability of the clumsy, crippled gull to elude their attacks.—LEE E. YEAGER, Colorado Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College, Fort Collins.

A Ring-necked Pheasant × Prairie Chicken hybrid.—About 1933, near Ellendale, southeastern North Dakota, Burton Brown of Forbes, North Dakota, shot an interesting cross between a Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) and a Prairie Chicken (*Tympanu-*